

Lake Michigan Fisheries Team
February 3-4, 2000 – Sheboygan

Notes

(prepared by Bill Horns, February 7, 2000)

Present: Terry Lychwick, Dick Rebicek, Mike Toney, Pradeep Hirethota, Brad Eggold, Matt Coffaro, Jim Moore, Bob Topel, Steve Hogler, Dick Rossberg, Steve Fajfer, Mark Opgenorth, Brian Belonger, Tom Hansen, Paul Peeters, Gus Ernst, Bill Horns, George Boronow, Chip Krohn, Charlie Verhoeven.

Next Meeting: March 30-31, Sheboygan

This is a summary of decisions, recommendations, and planned actions arising from the Feb 3-4 meeting. It is not intended as a comprehensive review of all discussions.

- 1) Criteria for re-opening commercial fishing for yellow perch. The following LMFT recommendation was ratified: *The LMFT recommends a) that any criteria for reopening commercial fishing for yellow perch on Lake Michigan be developed jointly with the other states, b) that the appropriate team members work with the Yellow Perch Task Group to develop criteria for review by the Lake Michigan Committee at its March meeting, and c) that no commercial fishing, except scientific assessments needed to determine whether those criteria have been met, be allowed before the Commercial Fishing Task Force has finished its work and new enforceable regulations are in place.*
- 2) Operation/maintenance plan for the *Perca*. The Boat Committee (Belonger, Eggold, and Beilfus) will develop an operations and maintenance plan for the *Perca*. The plan will attempt to be a comprehensive guide and will address the following questions: Who may operate the boat? What training and/or experience will be required? Who is responsible for maintenance? When will the boat be available for SER, Door County, and Green Bay work? The first draft of this plan will be reviewed by the LMFT at our next meeting. The Boat Committee will also review current improvement plans and oversee the work scheduled for completion this spring.
- 3) We reached agreement the general outline for a Lake Michigan Partnership Team. I will circulate a revised LMPT charge that reflects the LMFT's suggestions. Team members should share comments on this with the Policy Committee (Horns, Moore, Eggold). I will ask the Policy Committee to endorse a final recommendation for presentation to the Guidance Team (Staggs, Verhoeven, Krohn).
- 4) We discussed and amended the draft "Statement of Scope and Process" for updating the Lake Michigan Integrated Fisheries Management Plan. I will circulate a revised draft reflecting the LMFT's suggestions. Team members should relay any comments to the Policy Committee, which will endorse a final version for presentation to the Guidance Team.
- 5) Charter fishing report. The Team agreed that no further action is needed at this time.

- 6) Chub fishing regulations. When we meet in March, we will decide whether or not to move forward with a rule. Prior to that meeting 1) I will initiate a pink sheet setting out the rule-making timetable so that if we decide to go forward, we can have the new rule in place by next January, 2) Mike Toneys will complete a review of year-round incidental catch data in the chub fishery, and 3) Mike will summarize data for the winter fishing period.
- 7) Formal revisions to the LMFT Charge were deferred, although we noted and applauded Brad Eggold's appointment as SER Lake Michigan Supervisor and recognized that he will now serve on the LMFT Policy Committee.
- 8) Pikemasters has proposed a 26" minimum, with a 2 fish bag limit, for Green Bay. Brian will review this proposal in light of relevant creel data, for discussion at the next LMFT meeting.
- 9) We discussed three LE issues. 1) Regarding a proposed rule to limit the use of underwater cameras during fishing, the Team endorsed presentation of this as an advisory question for the 2001 spring hearings. 2) Regarding allowing fishers to set but not fish trap nets prior to the whitefish season, the Team made no recommendation for rule making at this time. 3) Regarding regulation of importation of ornamental fish and other exotic organisms, Tom Hansen will prepare a draft recommendation for consideration by the LMFT at our next meeting.
- 10) Strawberry Creek. Mark Opgenorth agreed to draft a written review of three options, for discussion at the next Team meeting. The three options are 1) installation of a permanent 24" pipe and pump as outlined by Chuck Burney, 2) installation of a permanent 6" pipe and acquisition of a stand-by pump to be operated when needed, 3) acquisition of a flexible 6" pipe or hose and a stand-by pump for deployment and operation when needed. For each option, Mark will summarize initial costs, operation costs (including manpower), deployment costs (including manpower) for options 2 and 3, flow provided by the system, permits needed for installation or deployment, easements needed for installation or deployment, and other relevant issues.
- 11) The LMFT endorsed the following recommendations by Team Steelhead: 1) In 2000, the 90,000 Skamania that are expected to be available will be stocked in the Kewaunee (35,000), Root (35,000), Menominee (10,000) and Milwaukee (10,000) Rivers. 2) Skamania stocked in the Menominee and Milwaukee Rivers in 2000 and 2001 will be fin-clipped to allow identification of returning adults for use as brood stock. 3) Because the IPN issue has not been fully resolved in Indiana, we will not receive Skamania eggs this winter from Indiana. 4) Because we expect to have only around 40,000 yearling Skamania for stocking as yearlings in 2001, and because the Root River provides the best return rates, all Skamania yearlings will be stocked in the Root River in 2001. 5) All Arlee strain rainbow trout will be freeze branded to denote strain and year stocked. The LMFT also agreed to request GMU leaders to make staff available for marking of Arlee rainbow trout to be stocked in 2001.

Other LMFT recommendations: 1) All currently-available Arlees be stocked as yearlings in 2001, but that no Erwins be obtained for stocking that year. We noted that we may have to

reconsider our earlier request for 60,000 brook trout for stocking in 2001. Team Steelhead should consider options for a second new strain of rainbows to be stocked in 2002. 2) It would be appropriate for Jim Moore to ask the Lake Michigan Committee to consider establishing a Steelhead Task Group to review lakewide management of steelhead. 3) Mark Opgenorth and Steve Hogler will develop a proposal for development of a slide show and glossy brochure about steelhead management in Wisconsin.

- 12) Preparations for "Lake Michigan Management Reports – 2000". Don't forget, March 1 is the deadline for submitting chapters to me.
- 13) Jim Moore will be asked to recommend individuals for the March workshop on "Application of decision analysis to Great Lakes fishery management." We discussed the issue and agreed that two of the three advisors to the GLFC (Hickey and Both) would be good candidates. I will check with Mike Jones to see if any travel money is available for Wisconsin participants.
- 14) Paul Peeters will move ahead with plans for a cooperative agreement with whitefish fishers to study implications of setting trap nets deeper than 90 feet.
- 15) Information needs of WBUD (Waterbody Use Designation Advisory Committee). Steve and Terry requested additional information from managers.
- 16) I will prepare a draft charge to guide formation of a Lake Trout Task Force to review the current requirement that all incidentally caught lake trout be discarded, dead or alive. This will be reviewed at the next LMFT meeting.
- 17) USFWS intends to develop a management plan and environmental impact statement for double-crested cormorants. This may involve a public scoping meeting in Green Bay. I agreed to inquire about the status of development of a Department position on this.
- 18) I have been volunteered to attend the modeling workshop scheduled for April 11-12 in Ann Arbor. Some LMFT participation is needed.
- 19) We discussed the issue of Wisconsin involvement in the ongoing negotiations between Michigan and the United States regarding tribal fishing in northern Lake Michigan. The LMFT agreed that Wisconsin has a stake in this, and should be more involved. I will prepare draft statement on this for consideration by our Policy Committee
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